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## Indiana Communities to Participate in Program Aimed at Improving Tourism, Economic Development

INDIANAPOLIS – Lt. Governor Becky Skillman announced today that 11 Indiana communities will participate in a community assessment program designed to help improve tourism and economic development. The assessments are scheduled to take place between April and November 2008 and will be led by Roger Brooks, founding member of the Destination Development group. Each of the 11 communities will receive \$5,000 toward the cost of participating in the program, provided by the Indiana Office of Tourism Development.

“Roger Brooks will provide a wealth of knowledge and ideas on how Indiana can create new avenues for tourism,” said Lt. Governor Skillman. “This program offers a unique opportunity for communities to learn ways to increase tourism marketing and achieve future economic success.”

Eleven local convention and visitors bureaus applied for and were accepted to participate in the program and receive funding. The Association of Indiana Convention and Visitors Bureaus (AICVB) facilitated the grants.

- Hendricks County Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Kosciusko County Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Lafayette/West Lafayette Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Madison Area Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Marion/Grant County Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Orange County Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Perry County Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Porter County Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Shipshewana/LaGrange County Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Switzerland County Tourism
- Vincennes/Knox County Convention and Visitors Bureau

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Brooks has worked in the tourism and resort development industry for more than 20 years. His expertise in the industry has led to hundreds of success stories. Brooks is well-known for his step-by-step instructions in helping communities build tourism development programs.

“CVBs understand the important role of smart community development,” said Marilee Fowler, president, Association of Indiana Convention and Visitors Bureau, and Executive Director of the Evansville CVB. “Developing tourism is an economic driver and also improves quality of life.”

As part of the assessment program, Brooks will visit each community and review their marketing materials. His findings and suggestions will be presented in a workshop format, as well as in a report which will include photos, examples, suggestions, and other information intended to create discussion within the community.

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*Lt. Governor Becky Skillman oversees the Indiana Office of Tourism Development. Amy Vaughan serves as the agency's Director.*